

which this loan program is domiciled, and have assurances from them that we will visit the gentleman's concerns and adopt a reporting regime, if not exactly, very similar to this.

I would be supportive of and I am sure all members of the Louisiana delegation who are here on the floor would also support the gentleman's request, but would respectfully ask, given the concerns of time and the issues at hand, that the gentleman would withdraw his objection. We would be happy to note formally in the record our agreement to proceed with the gentleman on our return to work absent the Columbus Day recess to achieve the gentleman's interest.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, continuing my reservation, I have been told by several people that they do not want me to pursue this because "the Senate is going out of session and it will be hard to get an amended version considered by the Senate."

Heaven forbid that we should ask the Senate to come back and work on something of this urgency. This is the same Senate that did not hesitate to come back in order to tell one American family, the Schiavo family, how they should deal with an end-of-life issue for one of their family members, and yet we are told that we should not build in this protection for the taxpayer because it might inconvenience the other body.

I am very reluctant to agree to proceeding with this legislation without this reporting requirement because, as we have just discovered under the previous \$50 billion that we provided to FEMA, they have given us a miserable explanation of the money that they have spent so far. They have given us meaningless spreadsheets and money defined in very broad, meaningless categories that tells the Congress nothing that will enable us to exercise our responsibilities as watchdogs of the public purse.

So, I guess my question is, if I withdraw my reservation, how soon can we expect to have this kind of reporting requirement brought to the House so that we know that in fact the money which is being provided will be used only for the purpose for which it is described today?

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman will yield further, I thank the gentleman for his question. I would point out, we would act forthwith, and perhaps there would be additional items that we would be interested in having reported to us on the matter of these loan dispositions. So we have some accountability to our constituencies and know what local governments are seeking in the way of assistance and how we may further provide aid.

So the gentleman's point is important to us in the delegation as well as to the gentleman for his own satisfaction that the funds are being used appropriately.

I would like to have the possibility of working with the gentleman's staff

over the recess week we are about to enter into, in consultation with the staff from the offices of the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. OBERSTAR) and the gentleman from Alaska (Chairman YOUNG), to try to perfect a reporting regime that the gentleman and I and the chairman would find acceptable to achieve his goals, and it would be obtained as soon as agreement can be obtained. I would commit our delegation to be fully supportive of that effort.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. OBEY. I yield to the gentleman from Alaska.

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, I have not communicated with the gentleman from Minnesota, because I support what the gentleman wants to do, but I would suggest that if the gentleman from Minnesota and I can reach this agreement, and I am sure we can, we can come out with a resolution out of our committee immediately and bring it to the floor under unanimous consent, because what I think what the gentleman is asking is very legitimate.

I will commit that to the gentleman as chairman of the committee, and I am sure the gentleman from Minnesota and I can work that out. So I give you that commitment.

Mr. OBEY. Mr. Speaker, continuing my reservation, I thank both gentlemen for their responses. Let me say that while I intend to withdraw my reservation, given those assurances, I would hope that that would happen as soon as possible, and I would also hope that sometime, somewhere, someone will explain to me why we can forgive billions of dollars of debt to the Third World, billions of dollars of debt to Eastern Europe, but not recognize that American citizens may need that same privilege.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the Senate bill, as follows:

S. 1858

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Community Disaster Loan Act of 2005".

SEC. 2. DISASTER LOANS.

(a) ESSENTIAL SERVICES.—Of the amounts provided in Public Law 109–62 for "Disaster Relief", up to \$750,000,000 may be transferred to the Disaster Assistance Direct Loan Program for the cost of direct loans as authorized under section 417 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5184) to be used to assist local governments in providing essential services: *Provided*, That such transfer may be made to subsidize gross obligations for the principal amount of direct loans not to exceed \$1,000,000,000 under section 417 of the Stafford Act: *Provided further*, That notwithstanding section 417(b) of the Stafford Act, the amount of any such loan issued pursuant to this section may exceed \$5,000,000: *Pro-*

vided further, That notwithstanding section 417(c)(1) of the Stafford Act, such loans may not be canceled: *Provided further*, That the cost of modifying such loans shall be as defined in section 502 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 (2 U.S.C. 661a).

(b) ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES.—Of the amounts provided in Public Law 109–62 for "Disaster Relief", up to \$1,000,000 may be transferred to the Disaster Assistance Direct Loan Program for administrative expenses to carry out the direct loan program, as authorized by section 417 of the Stafford Act.

The Senate bill was ordered to be read a third time, was read the third time, and passed, and a motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BAKER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on S. 1858.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Louisiana?

There was no objection.

A FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2863. An act making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate insists upon its amendment to the bill (H.R. 2863) "An Act making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2006, and for other purposes," and requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. STEVENS, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. BOND, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. HUTCHISON, Mr. BURNS, Mr. INOUE, Mr. BYRD, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. HARKIN, Mr. DORGAN, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. REID, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. MIKULSKI, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3765. An act to extend through December 31, 2007, the authority of the Secretary of the Army to accept and expend funds contributed by non-Federal public entities to expedite the processing of permits.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed with an amendment in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 3971. An act to provide assistance to individuals and States affected by Hurricane Katrina.